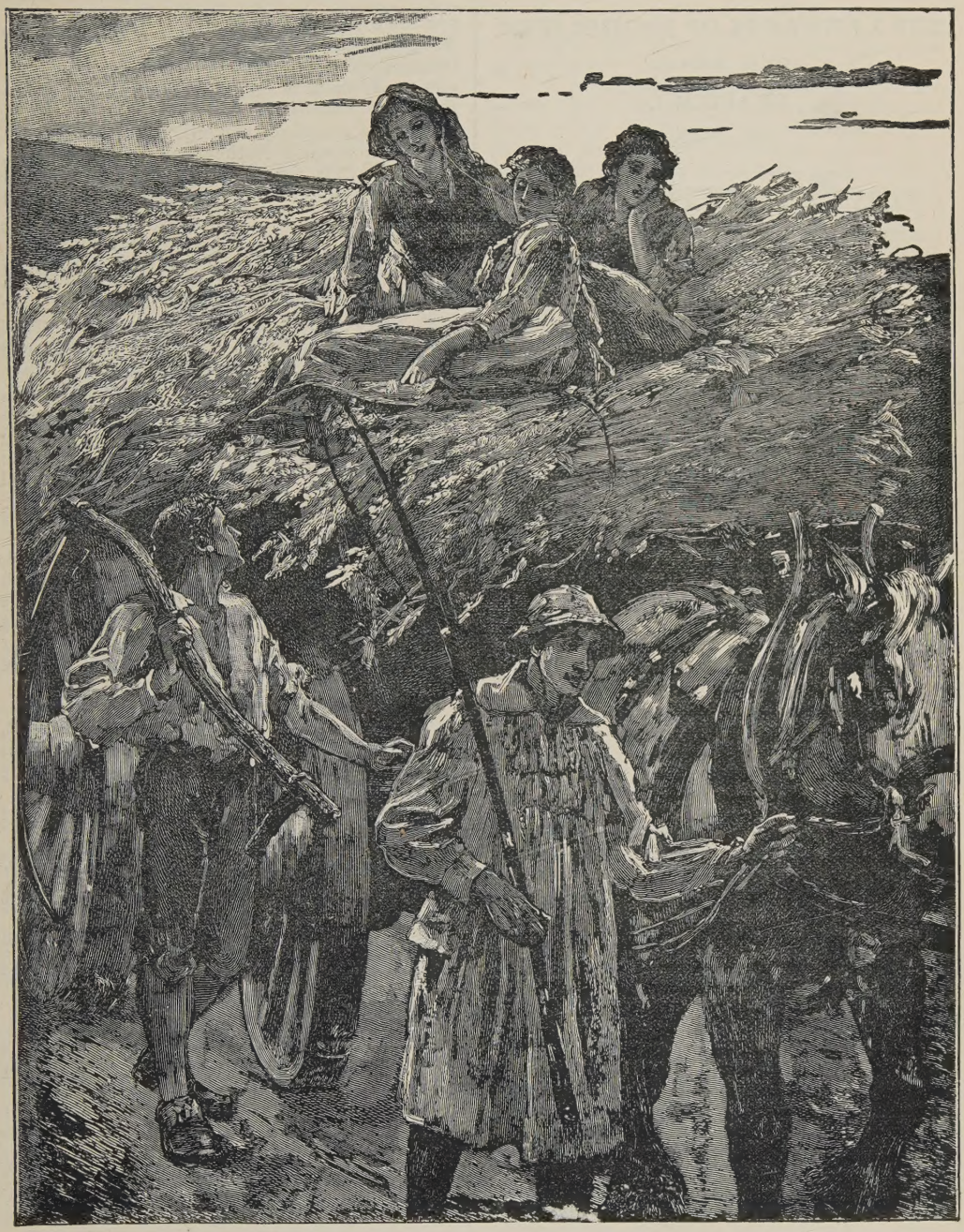
YOUNG DAYS.



HARVEST HOME (see page 89).

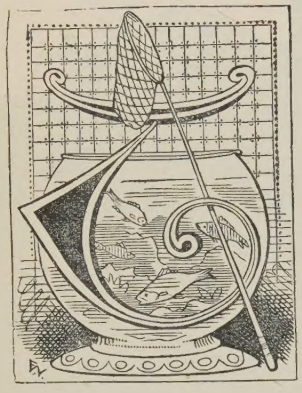
No. 176.—August, 1890. Vol. XV.

THE LAWNLEYS OF HIGHCLIFFE.

BY G. NORWAY.

CHAPTER I.

THE HERO.



TWO hundred years ago,—more than two hundred years ago,—there stood, on the borders of Somersetshire and Devonshire, a pleasant manor house of deep red brick with stone facings, and twisted chimneys, surrounded by woods.

The ground rose behind this place in an abrupt ascent, clothed with these woods to its summit, sheltering the gardens on the north and east; the house faced the west, and a long avenue of beech trees, on this side, led to it from a fine old gateway, surmounted by demi-lions rampant, in stone, the cognizance of the Lawnleys, of Highclyffe, as the estate was called.

Highclyffe had belonged to the Lawnleys for generations, and they had dwelt in it with great respectability, though they had never owned titles, nor made any great figure in the land.

There was great excitement in Highclyffe one summer's day. The women servants and villagers were dressed in their best, and walked off in groups of threes and fours to the market-town, as early as six o'clock in the morning. Mr. Lawnley, in his best coat of buff, his falling collar of Venetian lace, and plumed hat, mounted his horse, Barbarossa; and Mrs. Lawnley stood upon the horse block, in a new scarlet hood, ready to be lifted upon the pillion behind him, as soon as he had finished giving his last directions to old Gideon, who was marshalling the men in order to follow.

"Where is Master Oliver?" asked the lady, looking round.

"Here, mother," replied a fair lad of ten years of age. "Here, with Muriel. Oh! how I wish we might go with you to see the show!"

"There will be too great a crowd for you, my pretty," said Mrs. Lawnley. "Some day when you are a big boy you shall go. Kiss me, now. Be good children. Dorothy will give you cherries and diet bread for your nooning, and you may make a feast in the summer-house together. Good-bye."

She was seated on her pillion, took firm hold of her husband's leather belt, and rode off, followed by six men on clumsy cart horses, and Gideon heading them upon his master's second hunter.

The children were left in charge of the old housekeeper, who was fat and rheumatic, so could not walk far. They were very much disappointed that they might not go with the rest, for everyone had been talking for weeks about the great Duke of Monmouth, who was to pass through the town on that day. They praised his beauty, they described his grandeur, they told stories about his affability and generosity, and the children longed to see him. But it was a great sight for them to watch their father and mother ride away in such unwonted state, and they raced down the avenue after the little procession, so that they might see it as long as possible.

Mr. Lawnley turned at the bend of the road, and waved his hand to them, as they stood on the top of the high bank opposite to the entrance gate, clinging to the bushes in the hedge, and standing on tip-toe to see the better over the wild roses which grow so thickly there.

"They are gone," said Muriel, sighing.

"No, not quite; get up here, higher still. See, there they are! Look, over the bushes beyond the four-acre field. There are father's feathers, and mother's red hood!"

"Yes; and Gideon, and Laurence, and Giles! I see them!" cried Muriel.

"We ought to see them again when they have passed the copse, and are going up the hill," said Oliver. "They will come out by the time I have counted twenty."

Slowly did he count the number out, but had only reached eighteen, when Muriel screamed out, "Oh! brother, brother, look! Who are these people? Oh! how grand!"

Another procession, far grander than that which had just left the gates, approached them from an opposite direction. It was headed by the gorgeous figure of a remarkably handsome young man upon a white horse. He wore a scarlet riding dress, with a profusion of lace and ribbons. His rich, long curls fell over his Vandyke collar, and were lifted and stirred by the summer breeze as he rode along. His hat was plumed with snow white feathers, clasped

with brilliant jewels; he wore jewels hanging to a golden chain around his neck, and upon a wide blue ribbon that crossed his broad breast. Oliver and Muriel had never seen so splendid a figure in their short lives.

A crowd of gentlemen, soldiers, and servants accompanied and followed the leading figure, who rode slightly in advance of all, silent, and with a somewhat dreamy or melancholy expression in his fine eyes, which were fixed upon vacancy before him, as if he were looking into futurity to see——what?

But his attention was recalled to the present by the sight of the pretty pair of little ones clinging to the hedge, among the wild roses. Oliver, in his tight-fitting blue dress, girt with a wide sash or scarf of the same, had his arm around the little, white-clad form of his sister, several years his junior, yet as like him as an abundance of fair, curling tresses, wide-opened blue eyes, and peachy cheeks, could make a girl resemble a boy.

Suddenly a cry arose among the gentleman's followers, of

"A Monmouth! A Monmouth! Hurrah! Hurrah for King Monmouth!"

It was, indeed, the lordly duke, the idol of the West Country, the hero expected in the neighbouring town; who, by some change in the programme had altered his route at the last moment, and unexpectedly came this way.

Oliver knew at once who it must be, and, flushing high with admiration and excitement, shouted out with the best—"Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah! King Monmouth for ever! A Monmouth! A Monmouth!"

He let go his hold upon his sister in his ecstasy, that he might toss his arms in the air; and she, following suit, let go her grasp upon the bush which half-supported her, waved her little hands, and called out too, "A Monmouth!" when, lo and behold, her foot slipped, and down the steep bank she came rolling, crushing the fern fronds on her way, and making havoc among the blue stars of the veronicas.

The cry of "A Monmouth!" ended in a shriek of pain, fright, and alarm, as she rolled right out into the middle of the road, before the feet of the horses.

The Duke curbed his steed, reining it in so hard that it rose on its hind legs as he forced it backwards, snorting and prancing, but checked in time. In another moment he had sprung from his saddle, and had the child in his arms, wiping the mud from her face most tenderly with his laced and perfumed kerchief.

Muriel was stunned for a minute, then gathering her voice, began to cry lustily.

"No, no, my lady bird, do not cry," said the young man, "see, thou art not hurt; the good horse would not trample upon so little a girl. Kiss me, pretty one! there, there, that is right, let the sun shine out through the tears. Why, I thought that Queen Summer was shedding her roses on my path broadcast."

He sat down in the hedge; and, with Muriel on his knee, fondled and soothed her thus, till she stopped sobbing, and, laying her curly head on his bosom, drew a long, deep sigh.

"And what is your name, my hero?" said he, addressing Oliver, who stood before him, staring with all his eyes.

"Oliver,' said he. "Oliver Lawnley, and this is Muriel."

"Well, my boy," said the Duke, tying his wet and muddy handkerchief loosely round the lad's neck, "wear thy little lady's favour, and take better care of her in future. And, sweetheart," continued he, drawing a silver box of lozenges from his pocket, "keep this in remembrance of the kiss thou art going to give James of Monmouth with thy own rosy lips. He will not forget the fair wild rose of Lawnley. Adieu."

"A Monmouth! A Monmouth!" cried the people again, as he kissed the little girl once more, set her down within the old gateway, and turned to remount his horse.

"A Monmouth for ever! Hurrah for King Monmouth. Hurrah! Hurrah!"

The children stood gazing after the cavalcade till it disappeared from sight, lost in wonder and admiration.

CHAPTER II.

MONMOUTH'S LANDING.

Five years passed away, during which time many important events had occurred in England.

King Charles II. had no lawful son, neither was he likely to have one by that time, as he and his queen were growing old. The natural heir to the English crown was his brother James, Duke of York; but nobody loved James, who possessed all the faults of the Stuart family without their charm and grace. Besides, James was a Roman Catholic of the most fanatical description, and people had not forgotten the Smithfield fires of Mary Tudor's reign, little more than a hundred years previously, and feared that James would recommence persecution of the same description.

Many were, therefore, anxious that Charles

should pass a Bill, in Parliament, excluding his brother from the Crown, and passing it on to Mary, daughter of James, who was married to the Prince of Orange, an enlightened Protestant, certain to uphold religious freedom in the land.

There was, however, another party of people in England who wished to have the Duke of Monmouth as heir to the throne. Monmouth was really the king's son ; but, as Charles had never married his mother, it would be against the laws of the country for the Duke to succeed him as king.

Monmouth had all the popularity which James, Duke of York, lacked. He was beloved by everyone who knew him ; and, though full of the gravest faults, possessed so much charm of manner, that people forgave in him what they never overlooked in his uncle. In the West of England particularly there was a very strong wish that he should be recognized as Prince of Wales, and a story was currently believed that Charles was secretly married to his mother ; which, however, Charles denied. At the same time, he loaded the Duke of Monmouth with honours, and permitted him to do many things which were only allowed in members of the Royal family ; so that there was little cause for wonder that people's minds were divided, and the country torn with dissension.

Plot succeeded plot ; conspiracy followed conspiracy. The worst of these was known as the Rye House Plot, from the name of the house where the conspirators met. The object of this plot was to exclude the Duke of York from all chance of inheriting the throne ; but some of the most desperate of the people concerned in it secretly formed another, into which the rest were not admitted. This plot, known as the Meal Tub Conspiracy, because the papers connected with it were hidden in a meal tub, was designed to connive at the murder of both the King and his brother, and the making of Monmouth king.

It is uncertain whether Monmouth himself was concerned in these plots or not ;—he said that he was not ; some people believed him and some refused to do so, and it became necessary for him to fly the country, and take refuge in Holland, where he lived for some years.

Upon the death of Charles II., his brother, James, ascended the throne, and immediately began to oppress the people, and to rule the country as badly as was feared. Monmouth's friends considered this to be the time for them to make a strong effort to depose him and make the Duke King in his stead.

Upon a lovely June morning, when the wild roses were once more in bloom, three foreign ships were seen to approach the coast at Lyme Regis ; and, from the largest of them, seven boats were put off, and rowed to the shore.

The people, gathered into knots on the cliffs, were lost in wonder as to who the person in these boats could be, and whispered together as they watched the landing of the men.

These were about eighty in number, headed by a lordly figure, who, commanding silence with a gesture of authority, knelt down, and implored the blessing of God upon his enterprize. All knelt around him, in solemn silence for a while ; then the leader, springing to his feet, drew his flashing sword, and put himself at the head of the little band.

At the same moment, a broad blue banner was unfurled, and a murmur, spreading from mouth to mouth, gradually broke into joyful cries of "A Monmouth ! A Monmouth ! The Protestant religion !"

All rushed forwards, the crowd gathered thick and fast as the soldiers, headed by the beloved hero, marched into the town ; the enthusiasm was unbounded, if but few of the gentry flocked to the blue standard, the tradespeople, the town's people, the villagers swarmed in, thick and fast. To them, the Duke was the rightful heir to the Crown ; the champion of Protestantism ; the darling of their hearts. He was excluded from the throne of his father by a black conspiracy, and it was for them to secure his rights for him.

Fifteen hundred men were enrolled on his lists before he had been on English ground for twenty-four hours ; it was busy work for all the clerks whom he could secure to take down their names, and, in a few days, Monmouth was at the head of more men than he could arm or drill properly.

If this was the plight with foot soldiers, the case was still worse with cavalry. The farmers and country people came in crowds, upon cart horses, hunters, and post horses, but none of these had previously been trained to stand fire, therefore they were of little use.

Soldiers were, certainly, in those days, not so regularly drilled and disciplined as they are now. At all times, an army was too often more or less like a mob ; but much had been learnt during the wars of the commonwealth ; and the rabble rout, gathered around Monmouth's blue flag, was not fit to be opposed to troops that were the successors of the grim, steady Ironsides,

trained by Fairfax and Cromwell, or taught discipline by many a battle with them.

None should have known this better than Monmouth himself; but he trusted to his own prestige, his gallantry, and the devotion of the people.

Mr. Lawnley of Highclyffe was dead at this time. He had died the year before, and the boy whom we saw in the previous chapter, as a child, was now a fine lad of fifteen, and the owner of that pleasant demesne.

His mother lived there with him, and his little sister was at school in Taunton.

Mrs. Lawnley, who had been very fondly attached to her husband, had sunk into bad health since his death. She led the life of an invalid, rarely leaving her dressing room, and tended with devotion by old Dorothy, who did not seem to be at all more aged than she was five years earlier.

Mrs. Lawnley had come from a distant county, and had not kept up any connection with her own family; while her husband had been the last of his own race; the young Oliver was, therefore, more of his own master than is usual at so early an age; accustomed to think for himself, and act as he pleased; but his father had been ill for a long time before he died; and, on account of his son's extreme youth, had let the lands immediately around the Hall,—even the paddock itself,—on a long lease, and reduced his establishment into the limits of a very simple household.

When, therefore, upon Monmouth's landing, Oliver was all on fire to join his standard, he did not possess any following such as his father could have brought into the field; neither, as he was not of age, had he large funds with which to equip himself, much less a troop of horsemen.

His property was in the hands of trustees until he should reach the age of twenty-one; and the family solicitor, who acted for these gentlemen, utterly refused to advance to him any money at all for what he termed "so mad a scheme."

Oliver stormed and raged, but fruitlessly. "Never mind," said he to himself, when he had failed in every endeavour to raise an adequate sum; "Never mind, the Duke shall at least have the support of my name and influence. I will go to him myself, and put myself at his disposal, as I can do no more."

Fearful of opposition or control, he told no one of his intention, and made up his mind to go alone.

(To be continued.)

HARVEST HOME.

BY MRS. MARY JOHNSON.

We own Thy hand, O God, in all
The wide-spread harvest-yield,
The loving kindness that has crowned
Our garden and our field.

We bless Thee for our sheltered homes,
With their affections true,
With all their wealth of social joy,
And scope Thy work to do.

We bless Thee for the tiny feet
That walk beside us here;
For childhood's merry music sweet,
Its trust that knows no fear.

And for the little ones who stayed
Within our homes a while,
And left with us the angel-grace
Of parting word and smile.

Not for our pain—our breaking hearts—
O God! we *cannot* bring
Our thanks for these, but, over all,
The shadow of Thy wing.

That they have lived, we thank Thee, Lord,
That they are still our own;
And thin the veil that hides from us
The glory round them thrown—

The glory of Thy gift and grace,
That now, with clasping hand,
We walk within, and see Thy face
And *need not understand.*

Thou hast not left our souls alone,
In ways unknown, unsought,
Thy love sustaining power hath shown,
Its nameless comfort brought.

We bless Thee for our faith and hope
The promise Thou hast given,
And for the glorious Harvest Home
That waits for us in heaven.

LITTLE ASKER'S PAGE.

A Holiday Page we will make it this month. Indeed, how can it be anything else when I am writing it for you here in my holiday-time, when all your letters which I shall print will be about holidays, and when you may read *Young Days* in your holiday too.

WHERE AM I?

Shall I tell? Yes, I think I will—partly. I am in Upper Wharfedale, in Yorkshire, one of the least known, yet most beautiful portions of this most beautiful dale. Nay, I am not going to describe it. Little Askers don't like long descriptions of places. I will only say that here are clear river, level pastures, green slopes, lovely hills, heathery moors, rich woods, a deep glen, fine roads, and foot-ways through fields and meadows, so many that you seem to find a fresh one every day. And what is best of all, wherever you like to go you can go. The words "Trespassers Prosecuted" are actually difficult to discover. We did discover one or two signs in a certain part of the woods, but then the dreadful word wasn't properly spelled. The signs said "Trespassers Proscuted," but the "proscution" threatened was for cutting down trees or pulling up plant-roots without leave. So we had nothing to be afraid of. I am sure I was not likely to try and carry off a pine tree on my shoulder, and I hope all my Little Askers have more sense than some people who make such a practice of carrying off fern and flower roots, that in many districts, where certain ferns and wild flowers once grew in abundance, not one of the kind is now to be found. They have not died out; they have been destroyed, killed, murdered by senseless selfishness. The owners of the woods I am writing of, do right to protect the fern and flower roots. Anybody can walk through the woods, anyone can pluck flowers, ferns, and leaves quite freely. What more can people want? For myself I like to see the wild-flowers growing just in their own natural places. I have no great objection to you gathering handfuls of them to take home with you, but can it be right to pluck them so freely, only to fling them into the dust of the roadside before you get home?

WHAT I LIKE IN HOLIDAY TIME.

The one thing I think I like best of all is to get into an old English lane,—a lane, I mean, which has been open a very long time, which is not much used now, and which may be far away off among the fields. There are such lanes in England, fifty, a hundred, and even two hundred years old. I like a lane when it is grassy underfoot, that short, dry, green grass, which makes a soft and springy carpet of turf; and then I like an old copse on each side. Ah! that's the lane to linger in, to take in "the harvest of a quiet eye," to find the most charming wild-flowers, the rarest butterflies, the cunningest insects.

Yes, put me down in one of these old lanes on a sunny day, and let me have old clothes on that I shan't be afraid of soiling and tearing, for who likes to be always looking after one's clothes at such a time! Oh, yes, you can come with me if you like, and if you won't be in a hurry, and if you'll not be always saying "Come along!" and if you'll just let me loiter, and look, and listen to my heart's content. I almost dislike people who, in their holidays, are always in a hurry, and forever asking "Where shall we go next? What shall we do next?" They might think every place was a place to go *from*. And that is just what an old lane is not. No, I'm willing to hurry and work hard when needful, but not on a holiday. And I tell you Little Askers all that as long as you live in this world, you will never see Nature while you are in a hurry.

The jolliest holiday I ever had was just when I was beginning to learn about wild-flowers. It was one summer in Ireland. We were staying "at the shore," as they call the sea-side there. This shore was a long, gentle slope of rocks covered with soft, green turf. I had Johns' "Flowers of the Field" with me, which, by the way, is the best book of the kind I have ever met with. The weather was glorious. My way was, each day to saunter out along the shore until I met with a new wild-flower. So soon as we met I set to work on the spot to find out its name and its family. The only thing I had to go by then was to count the stamens. With a little pocket-glass I did this. Next I turned to Johns' book, which I always took with me. Often it took me hours to name my new wild-flower. But then I was learning something or other all the time. And do you think I have ever forgotten a single flower I found and named on that holiday? No, indeed. Nor do I think there was a single flower upon

that shore, either in the grass, in the clefts and crevices, or on the crests of the rocks, which I did not know when my holiday was done. And then day by day there was the warm sunshine, the clear air and sky, the blue sea, and the green velvety turf,—and all these good things, added to the new knowledge I was gaining so happily, have left a picture and a pleasure in my mind which make me think of that as my best of holidays.

Of course there are a good many other things I like in holiday time besides these I am telling you of, but I think the things I have told are those I like best.

WET EVENINGS.

Fine evenings are a nice time for a good walk. But sometimes, even in holiday time, an evening may be wet or cold. What can you do inside? Two charmingly funny books to read aloud are "Uncle Remus" and "Nights with Uncle Remus," 1/6. These are the only two we have needed, except one Sunday evening I think, I read aloud that short lovely piece published in Cassells' National Library (6d.), entitled "The Story Without an End." As for games you can think of any number. There is, however, one game which we have played twice nearly every night. It is called "An Hour with Dickens."

But, dear me, I must leave room for the letters. Here they are. The youngest writer shall come first.

Highfield.

Dear Mr. Wright,

I think I like going to the sea-side best. I am very glad to hear you like my answer in April. I have found a great many more [flowers]. Can you tell me anything about a butterfly?

Your affectionate answerer
[and asker]
DOROTHY DREW.

7 years old.

22, Gabriel's Hill,
July 27th.

Dear Mr. Wright,

In answer to your questions respecting what to do in holiday times,

1.—In holiday time, I like to go for long walks, to go on the river, to go to the sea-side, to read.

2.—On evenings when it is too cold to go out, it is very nice to play at charades, cards, proverbs, blind man's buff, read, etc.

3.—I think nice books to read in the holidays are :—

The Waverley Novels, by Sir Walter Scott.
Tales of Indian Life, Deerslayer, &c.
The Scottish Chiefs.
St. George for England.
The Young Gold Hunters.
The Young Fur Traders.
The Days of Bruce, &c.

4.—I think one of the jolliest things to do in the holidays, is to go for a nice pic-nic on the river.

Yours truly,
ELSIE M. ELLIS

3, Richmond Terrace,
Cox Street,
Coventry.

Dear Sir,

I should like to spend my holiday going pic-nicing in the wood, and if time would permit, I should like to go to the North of Devon and ramble over the ramps and quarries, and pick the wild strawberries, and different species of ferns that grow in abundance.

2nd.—I think on a wet or cold evening, sit round a nice fire and ask conundrums. Or a more lively game would be the old lady and her family coach.

3rd.—I think Edith Vernon's Life-work is a beautiful books for girls. But for young children Stumps is very interesting. But for a boy, Robinson Crusoe I think is a suitable book.

4th.—The jolliest thing I ever had was a splendid piano from papa for a New Year's gift, and the jolliest thing I ever did is to sit down and play it.

I remain,
Yours respectfully,
HILDA ALBINA STRINGFELLOW.

July 6th, 1890.

Dear Mr. Wright,

I think the nicest things to do in holidays are, batheing, boating, walking and pic-nics; and the nicest games for wet days, cannonade or castle bagatelle, ramps, nap, and mastership.

And the best books I ever read in holiday time are, "Little Lord Fauntleroy," "Sylvie and Bruno" by Louis [Lewis] Carroll, and the "Silver Skates" by Mrs. E. Dodge.

The jolliest thing we ever did in holidays was going to France.

Your affectionate answerer,
ELEANOR SHARPE.

GERTRUDE BROOK'S Question, and others, received. See next month.

AFTERNOONS IN SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

BY EMILY KENSETT.

We had lost our little parlour, in which so many pleasant chats had been held. Another class needed it, and we agreed to give it up to them; but we made our own corner of the big school-room look as cosy as we could, with a little table and bright cloth, and a vase of flowers in the centre of it. Not only that, but the old class had dispersed; some to be teachers, others leaving the town, and some having such busy week-days that a Sunday afternoon walk into the country seemed the best refreshment to them.

Now a younger set had taken their place, and I must introduce you to Lily, Maud, Alice, Fanny, Jane and Polly; interesting girls, all of them, of course, as indeed what girls are not, to those who watch them closely and learn to love them dearly? Doubtless, the many "quick eyes," who read this are equally so, to somebody; these certainly came to be, to their teacher.

A walk together into the woods, during the week, suggested the subject of our talk. We had seen everywhere, the little green things pushing themselves further up out of the ground, the primroses fading off, the wood-anemones disappearing, the blue bells just waking out of their winter sleep, and the trim little "bachelor's buttons" saucily opening their pink eyes to see if any single gentleman had one missing from his coat or waistcoat; the corn-blades were breaking through the sods, and life was stirring in every green tree branch.

"How many of you have a garden at home?" was the first question that greeted the girls on Sunday.

"We have," and "So have we." "We've got a nice large piece," and "I've got a little one all my own," were the answers.

"Have you sown anything in it?"

"I have put some mignonette seed in mine, and some sweet peas and wall flowers," said Alice. "My mother's is full now, she says she don't want any more flower seeds sown in her front garden, but I've got some mustard and cress growing in a box," answered Lily.

"Father has been putting in carrot and turnip seeds, and peas and beans, and seeing to his garden every night after he's done his work, for more than a month," said Polly, "and he says he must do it now the weather is right for it, or we shan't have any vegetables to eat, all the autumn and winter."

"Have all the seeds to be sown alike?"

"No, father makes little holes to put the peas and beans in; but he sows some of the seeds all along in a row, close together."

"Mother said I must sprinkle my mignonette broadcast, and then rake the mould lightly over it," said Alice.

"What motto was it that the gentleman who gave us an address last year, said he would like to see in every school-room?"

"I forget."

"Do you recollect, Fanny?"

"No, I can't think what it was, Miss Russell."

"What we sow———"

"Oh, yes! I know now," interrupted Lily.

"What we sow in youth we shall reap in age, for the seed-time of life is now."

"What sorts of seeds does that mean?"

"Being good?" asked Maud.

"The things that we do every day?" queried Alice.

"Yes; we are sowing that sort of seeds all the year round, and not in spring and summer only. And just as we feel sure that where we sow mignonette, we shall have a sweet scented plant, that where we sow lupins we shall have gay flowers, and where we put in potatoes we shall have something useful to store up for the winter when the flowers are all gone, so we may feel sure that the future will be a reaping time of the seeds of kindness, of honesty, of steadfast purpose; or of wilfulness, ill temper, and

untruthfulness, just according as we are sowing them to-day; for the law "What a man sows that will he also reap," holds good in the world of spirit as truly as in the world of nature. Can you tell me any hymns we sing about this sort of seed-sowing?"

"I know one the Salvation Army sing," said Polly. "It sounds something like you have been saying."

Sown in our weakness or sown in our might;
Sown in the darkness or sown in the light;
Gathered in time, or eternity,
Sure! ah sure! will the harvest be.

"Yes, that is a very good one. Now another. You Jane, please."

Sow in the morn thy seed,
At eve hold not thy hand;
To doubt and fear give thou no heed
Broadcast it o'er the land.

"Does anyone else think of another?"

Will "Scatter seeds of kindness, for a reaping By and Bye," do for one, asked Alice.

"Capitally! All the better because I want to tell you a story about a little girl that did. And she found they came up well too."

"Now, let's all listen." Then the seats were drawn up closer to the table, and the faces most of them wore the eager look of interest which the mention of a tale generally brings into them, while I told them the story of "Gypsy's sowing and reaping."

"Gypsy was a merry little maiden, who lived with her father and mother, her big brother Tom and her younger brother Winnie, a long, long way from here, right away across the sea in America. Just as the bit of her story opens that I want to tell you to-day, she and Tom were to be parted almost for the first time; Tom was going to college and was mightily proud of the fact; Gypsy was wondering however she would get on without the dear handsome brother who had played with her, petted and teased her ever since she could remember."

"Gypsy! Gypsy!"

But Gypsy didn't want to answer—she was curled up in the hay-loft, where presently Tom came and found her; when he wanted to know why she hadn't answered him, she had to explain that she was mending her dress which had been so tiresome as to tear.

"Come and have a chat with a fellow," said Tom, when Gypsy's long stitches had finished joining up the rent in a manner of which perhaps her mamma would scarcely approve next day.

"I want to go and see Sarah Rowe. She has a mud-turtle, as big as a dinner plate swimming round in her hogshead."

"Oh well! I'm not wanted then, I'll make myself scarce," said Master Tom descending the hayloft stairs.

Gypsy started off to see her friend, but had only got a little way before she thought how short a time longer she would have with Tom, and how few more chances for cosy chats they would have together. Should she give up her expected diversion that afternoon and coax Tom to have a row with her?

She soon made up her mind, and turned round; Tom was sitting on the doorstep whittling a piece of wood when she got back, and she had to make some effort before he would yield. He wanted to all the time, but you see he liked to have Gypsy beg a little. Soon they were walking down the lane, fragrant with honeysuckles and wild flowers; the boat-house was reached, the boat loosened and off they rowed, silent at first, but gradually beginning to talk of what college life would be like to Tom, of how strange it would be to him to be away from the home-life and home love he had always had; and of how Gypsy would feel lost without him.

Gypsy had sown her first little seed that day, when she had come back to spend the afternoon with Tom. Yet the seed would want careful watering and tending, and many, many more seeds must be sown before the blossoming of the flower and the ripening of the fruit.

Soon came the last Sunday, and as they sat on the doorstep together in the twilight, Gypsy gave Tom a little parcel.

"What is it?" said he, "a necktie?" as he held it up by its loop of ribbon as if that was its handle.

"No; a book-mark, I worked it with my hair, and just where the ends stick out is where they *would* break off. Only it was the only thing that I could make you that was all my own!"

"Is it for my Latin dictionary?"

"No; it's to put in your Bible, Tom."

Gypsy would like to have added "and I wish you would read it every day—" but she couldn't very well, because she didn't do so herself. But what Gypsy couldn't do perhaps Gypsy's mother did, for she had a long talk to Tom after he went to bed that night, and after she went downstairs Tom's curly head was hidden under the bed-clothes a good while—perhaps he was thinking.

Up at dawn next morning, and the boxes in the

passage ready corded ; the quiet breakfast at which everybody was afraid to look at everybody else—Tom's father fidgeting about the luggage and giving Tom particular instructions about his purse, and another bright five-dollar piece to put in it, Winnie poking in everybody's way, and poor little Gypsy struggling to keep a bright face so as not to make it harder for Tom to go away.

Then the coach started, and the house seemed lonely enough. Six hours afterwards Gypsy sat down to write her first letter to Tom, telling how bad she felt without him, how she had sat down to cry in his room, had got in disgrace with her lessons that morning because she had been finishing a tie to send him. How Winnie had been trying on an old suit he had left behind, saying he should be Tom now, and finally, feeling she must do something lively, she had started racing after Mrs. Surly's pet puppy, and had had an accident and tumbled into her starch tub, rousing that worthy lady's ire and bringing her round to ask Gypsy's mother why she didn't bring her children up better.

The letter reached Tom just as he had settled his things in his new rooms, and was wandering about wondering what to do with himself—he had got to the post office, and though he felt sure there would be nothing for him so soon, he might as well ask "just to make sure" he thought. So he had secured his letter just as one of his new fellow-students came up, with—

"Hallo, Breynton, are you going to the canteen ?"

The canteen was no place for Tom, and he knew it ; yet I am not sure but he would have gone if it had not been for Gypsy's letter. Now he must go home and read it ;—so Gypsy had watered her little seed !

She wrote regularly for some weeks ; then the examination came on and she missed a week, then she began a letter and the kitten tore it up, and the next time they had company, and she said she had not time to write before the mail went out. She was sorry by and by.

The time *will* slip along, and Gypsy had only just got used to being without Tom when the term ended, and they were all watching for the arrival of the stage coach. Soon it rattled up the steep street and Tom alighted, looking to Gypsy's partial eyes handsomer than ever. Then, with pine knots glowing in the grate, and all his favorite sorts of cakes on the table, they sat down to tea, listening delightedly to Tom's tales of college pranks and the tricks some of the fellows played on the professors.

"But how about your studies, my son ?" You have told us very little about them," said Mr. Breynton.

"Don't bother a fellow about lessons out of school," was the rather impatient reply.

And when the next morning Gypsy saw her father come out of Tom's room looking both angry and disappointed, she went in and found Tom sitting by the table surrounded by his books.

"What ! lessons in holiday, Tom ; how is that ?"

"I'm conditioned, that's all,"—but Tom looked pretty thoroughly ashamed of it.

"What does that mean ?"

"My marks were so low that I have got to work now to make them up."

"Oh, Tom !" It was all Gypsy said, but it was enough.

Then she turned to his open trunks, where the things were in sad disorder ; soiled linen, ink bottles, and books all tossed in together.

"What a shame ! Your new collars all spoilt. What is this book with such a pretty red cover ?"

"Hand that over to me, please. It's a key like all the fellows have to do their exercises by. No, you needn't look like that, Gypsy," for he caught the shocked, recoiling look in his sister's honest eyes, "I don't use it half so much as some of the fellows do ; and it's no secret at all—the professors know as well as possible that it is done.'

"I thought that was *cheating*, Tom ; and I did so want to be *proud* of you."

"Well, take the book away then and lock it up, and when I want it I will ask you for it ; but don't look at me like that again." Gypsy took the book thankfully enough and carried it safely away to her own room. Had she sown another seed ? I think so.

"What are you so busy making ?" asked her friend Delia Guest the next day.

"Only a hard, strong ball. Tom likes to pass ball sometimes."

"Come over and make toffee to-night with us."

"Thank-you ; no, I think I had better not ; Tom likes me to play draughts with him and I want to keep him at home, evenings."

Yes, it had come to that ; handsome, brilliant, and loveable as Tom was, he had two faults which were a great danger to him, he was easily led, and apt to be extravagant. Unsafe tendencies enough for a lad just launched into college-life, and coming straight away from the most patient, protecting home-love.

(To be continued.)

BIRDS OF MANY FEATHERS.

PART II.

COMPASSION, which was heightened by a feeling of remorse for having removed the robin from the fostering care of its tender parents, which were, perhaps, even then lamenting the untimely loss of their beloved nestling, overcame my terrors, and urged me to pass the flock of geese, which had removed to a little distance, and were now quietly feeding on the grass; and, for a wonder, suffered me to pass by unmolested.

Breathless with speed and agitation, I at length regained the avenue; having replaced the robin in its nest, I had imagined in so doing I had at least preserved him from the fate of his brothers and sisters; but I was mistaken: the following day I went to visit the nest, and found the poor forsaken bird stretched on the ground beside it, stiff and cold. The parent birds had, in all probability, never returned again to the nest, after they discovered the loss of their infant brood; and the poor innocent robin was starved to death.

This circumstance made so strong an impression on my mind, that I never from that day attempted to bring up young birds; and though I found many nests in the garden, I never touched any of the young birds, or robbed the old ones of their eggs, contenting myself with watching their parental employment, from the time of building and setting to that of hatching and feeding the callow broods; indeed, so far from molesting these innocent creatures, I became their best friend, and protected them with jealous care from those who would have taken their eggs, or destroyed their young ones.

It used to be a favourite amusement with my sister Susanna and I, to watch the progress our little protégées made in forming the mossy cradles for the reception of their future nestlings. It was pretty to see the troubled bright eyes with which some blackcap or chaffinch fearfully, yet resolutely, would regard us, from beneath the sheltering leaves that o'ercanopied her soft downy nest.

Each species have some particular difference of formation or material, to distinguish their nest from that of their fellows, either in the interior or exterior disposal of the articles they use. Nothing can be more exquisitely neat than the nest of the chaffinch, composed of the grey lichens of the apple or pear tree, intermingled with wool and fine hair; unless it be that of the goldfinch, whose little nest, elevated on the tall bough of some laurel or other lofty shrub in the garden, is woven with locks of soft wool, garnished with green moss from the roots or stem of some old tree, mingled with a few grey and yellow lichens; the inner part rendered most luxuriously soft with the silky down of the thistle; the seed of which plant forms so principal a part of the food of this bird as to give rise to its classical name, or thistle-finch.

The greenfinch, which is a remarkably shy bird, the slightest movement or approach of any one to her nest alarming her, and inducing her to quit her eggs or young ones, builds a careless nest of moss and hair, loosely constructed, and placed in a bush or in the hedge; quite a contrast to the neatly-formed and compact buildings of the chaffinch, the goldfinch, wren, and the long-tailed titmouse. The latter, which is called by a variety of names with us, Tom-tit, Pudding-Poke, and Oven-bird, is deservedly celebrated for the curious shape and elaborate workmanship displayed in its nest, which is shaped somewhat like a long bag, built round a naked spray a hawthorn or blackthorn (sloe); from the stem and bark of which it picks the tiny grey lichens and mosses, which are woven with inimitable skill among the threads of wool, which it unravels in its progress, lining the whole with feathers and down of the softest description, leaving only a small round hole towards the lower part of the front of the nest, by which to enter. This little creature feeds almost entirely on insects, and has always been a particular favourite with us, from its brisk, lively manners, and the ingenuity it displays in fabricating its singular nest.

Among our particular portégées, I must not omit a wren, which for several successive years built her nest in the silver blotched ivy, that spread its variegated mantle over the low, straw-covered roof of our rabbit-house. This little creature always fixed on the same spot, or within a few inches of the old site, for the habitation of her little family; like a careful economist, making use of all the old materiels that were suited to her purpose; and here, year after year, she hatched and cherished her numerous but tiny broop, free from all molestation. It was a matter of curiosity to watch her work, and see how carefully she covered the whole building, when completed, with an outer thatch of dried leaves, so artfully contrived as to hide the green mossy nest, with its tiny opening, from the prying eyes of strangers. It is wonderful how this little mother contrives to feed and nourish so many individuals, without neglecting one; and this, too, in utter darkness.

MARY LIZZIE'S LAST RACE

BY LUCY FLORENCE YOUNG.

MARY LIZZIE was known as the fastest runner in school. She was barely twelve years old, very slight, and taller than other girls of her age. When she was smaller, her father had nick-named her "Spider," for how she could run! Not a boy, even, could outstrip her in a race. She could play ball and vault so well that some of the boys used to call her "Tom-boy." She was not a "Tom-boy," however, but a wide-awake, healthy little girl, who enjoyed out-door sports.

Mary Lizzie's mother used to wish sometimes that her little girl did not love to run so much. She was always falling, and would come limping up the street, and crying so loud that the neighbours were alarmed,—until they got used to it. "I was running home, and I stubbed my toe," Mary Lizzie would wail.

"Why can't you walk?" Mamma would ask, as she wiped the child's eyes and covered the poor barked shins and knees with the usual "brown-paper plaster."

At last Mamma's patience gave out, and she said, "Mary Lizzie, if you *will* run, and can't help falling, you must bear your bruises bravely, and not come home making such a noise. The very next time you come home in this way I shall punish you."

Mary Lizzie looked at her mother and thought that was a hard fate; but she resolved never to fall again. She did, however,—oh, yes!—and broke the saucer in her dinner-pail. Then she took her promised punishment, which taught her to be braver and also to run without falling.

When Mary Lizzie turned twelve, she began to think herself that she was too old to run so much, and refused to race any more. Her companions, especially the boys, missed their gay runner, missed being beaten by a girl, and wished they had never called her "Tom-boy," and that she might still be willing to join in their sports.

But the boys were not disappointed very long. One day Marie Lizzie with a number of her companions, reached Dana Hill just as the coach with its four horses was passing through the town.

"I say, Mary Lizzie," called out a boy, "you can't beat that coach down the hill!"

Mary Lizzie's old ambition was fired in a moment; and in spite of books, dinner-pail, umbrella, and the muddy road, she started without a thought of her twelve years. Away she went, keeping even with the horses easily, while her schoolmates cheered her! The driver saw the fun, and taking out his whip touched up the horses. The passengers looked out and smiled; the small boys on top of the coach cheered and waved their hats. Mary Lizzie ran at full speed, her hat hanging down her back, her cape blowing out like wings, the umbrella and dinner-pail clattering together as she swung her arms, and her cheeks growing red with excitement. She was gaining on them, in spite of the driver's whip and the boys' derisive cheers. She was now a little in advance of the coach, and in another moment would have reached the goal, when alas! she stubbed her toe, and down she went into a puddle! Her books, papers, and umbrella flew in different directions, her hat went sailing into the muddy street, her pail emptied its contents into the gutter, her cape blew over her head, while the horses galloped out of sight amid the cheers of the small boys.

Poor Mary Lizzie picked herself up quickly. Her friends ran down the hill with sober faces to see if she were hurt, but not one could help laughing when they saw her. She had fallen into the soft mud, which still bore the mark of her nose, much to the amusement of one of the boys, who stooped to measure its depth with his finger. Mary Lizzie *was* a funny sight! Her clothes were all mud, and her hair, out of braid, was flying over her dirty face; but her eyes were dancing with fun as she exclaimed, "I beat 'em, any way!"

How her schoolmates did laugh and cheer their plucky little friend!

Mary Lizzie never raced with horses again, but she did with the boys, only in a different way. She gave more attention to her books, and would often beat the boys in their classes as she had in their foot-races.